MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

FACULTY OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Business Communication Skills

FOR BACHELOR STUDENTS

TOPIC 2b: BARRIERS TO EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

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Topic Outline

Introduction
- Defining a barrier to communication
- Defining Effective communication

Types of barriers
- Physical, physiological, socio-psychological and Semantic barriers.
- Solutions to the barriers to communication

Technological barrier
- Definition
- Types of technological barriers

Topic Learning outcomes

By the end of this topic, the learners will be able:

- To define barriers to effective communication.
- To define effective communication.
- To understand the different types of barriers.
- Apply strategies on how to overcome the barriers to effective

Barriers to Effective Communication

Barriers to effective communication are any obstacles that prevent clear, accurate, and effective exchange of ideas, information, or feelings between individuals or groups.

Barriers exist between all people, making communication much more difficult than most people seem to realize.

It is false to assume that if one can talk, he can communicate. Because so much of our education misleads people into thinking that communication is easier than it is, they become discouraged and give up when they run into difficulty.

Types of Barriers

1. Physical or Environmental Barriers

These are environmental factors which limit the sending and receiving of messages.

- Noise
- Time and distance
- Wrong choice of medium
- Surroundings
- Inadequacy of message design/ poorly expressed message
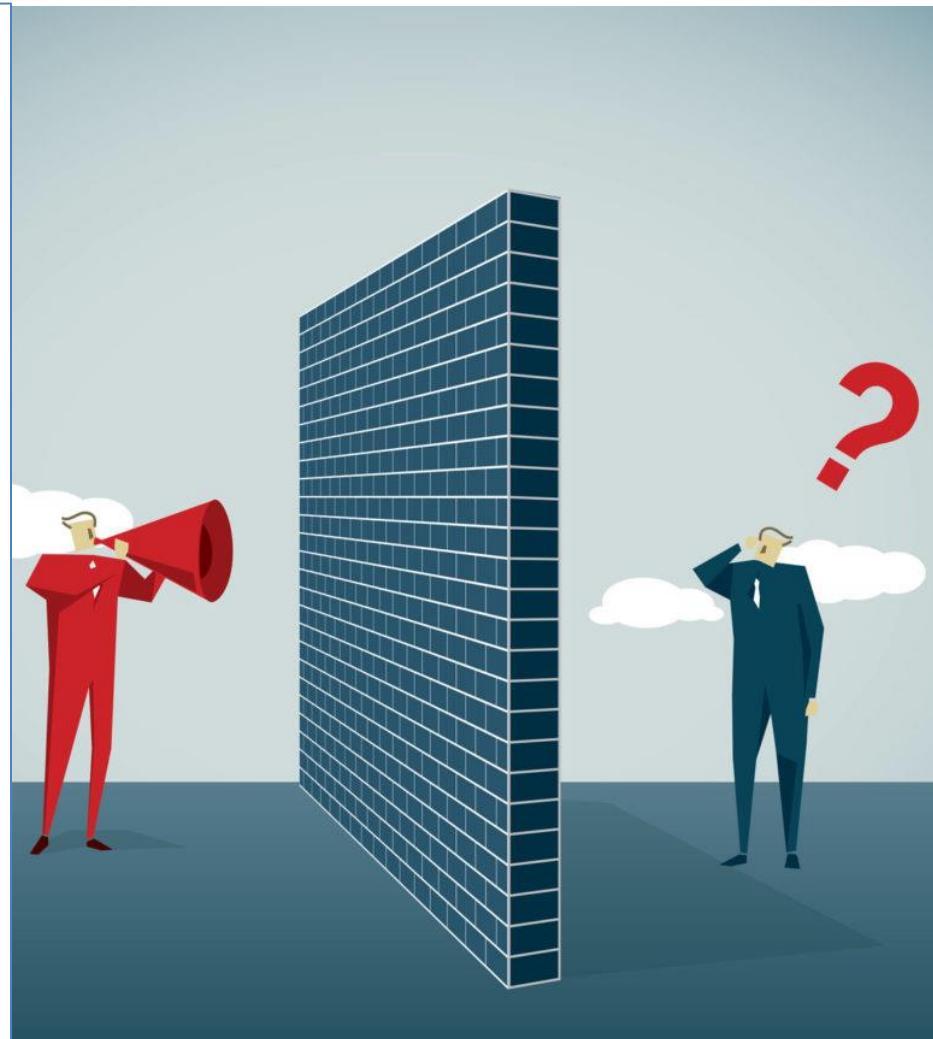
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2. Physiological or Biological barriers

These are related to a person's health and fitness.

These may arise due to disabilities that may affect the physical capability of the sender or the receiver.

Proper functioning of the vocal chords, hands, fingers, eyes is necessary for effective communication.

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3. Semantic barriers/ Language Barriers

The term 'semantic' refers to the systematic study of meaning of the words. Semantic barriers are barriers related to language. They cause obstructions in the process of receiving or understanding of the message during the process of encoding or decoding ideas and words

Misinterpretation of words

Use of technical language

Vocabulary deficiency of both the sender and the receiver may cause semantic barrier to communication.

Multiple meaning of the words in different context:

4. Psychological barriers

These are mental blocks or obstacles that hinder a person's ability to communicate effectively, perform tasks, or achieve goals. These barriers can be conscious or subconscious and often stem from various internal factors. Some common psychological barriers include:

- Fear and Anxiety
- Low Self-Esteem
- Negative   Thinking Perfectionism

- Stress and Overwhelm
- Prejudice and Stereotypes
- Lack of Motivation
- Emotional Barriers
- Cognitive Dissonance
- Resistance to Change
- Cultural and Social Influences

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How to Overcome the Barriers of Effective Communication

- Eliminating differences in perception
- Use of Simple Language
- Reduction and elimination of noise levels
- Active Listening
- Emotional State
- Simple Organizational Structure
- Avoid Information Overload
- Give Constructive Feedback
- Proper Media Selection
- Flexibility in meeting the targets

Technological Barriers in Communication

What are technological barriers in communication?

These refer to the obstacles and challenges that arise from the use or misuse of technology in exchanging information.
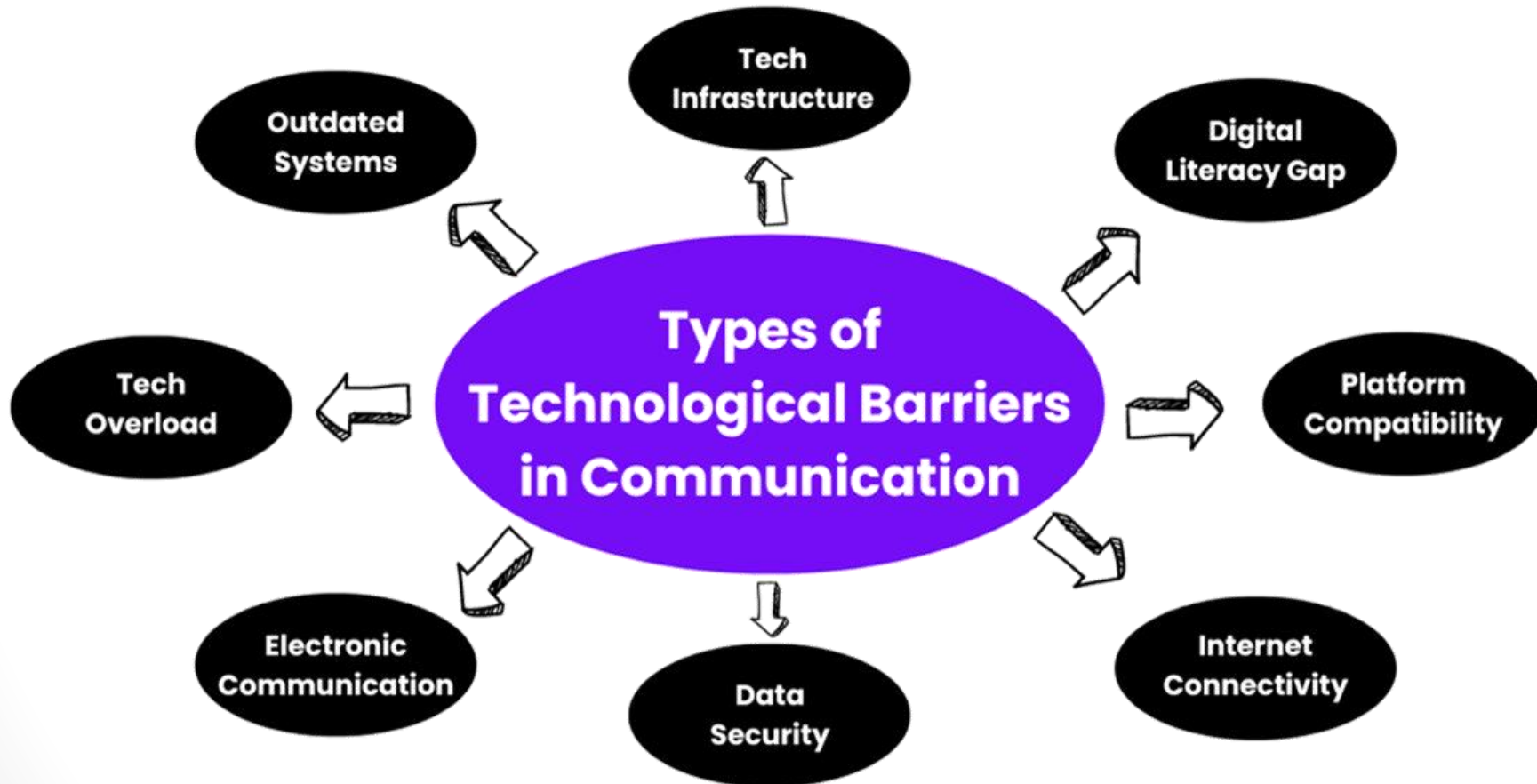
These barriers can range from simple issues like poor internet connectivity to more complex problems such as digital literacy gaps or platform incompatibility. Identifying and understanding these barriers is crucial for effective communication in today's technology-driven world.
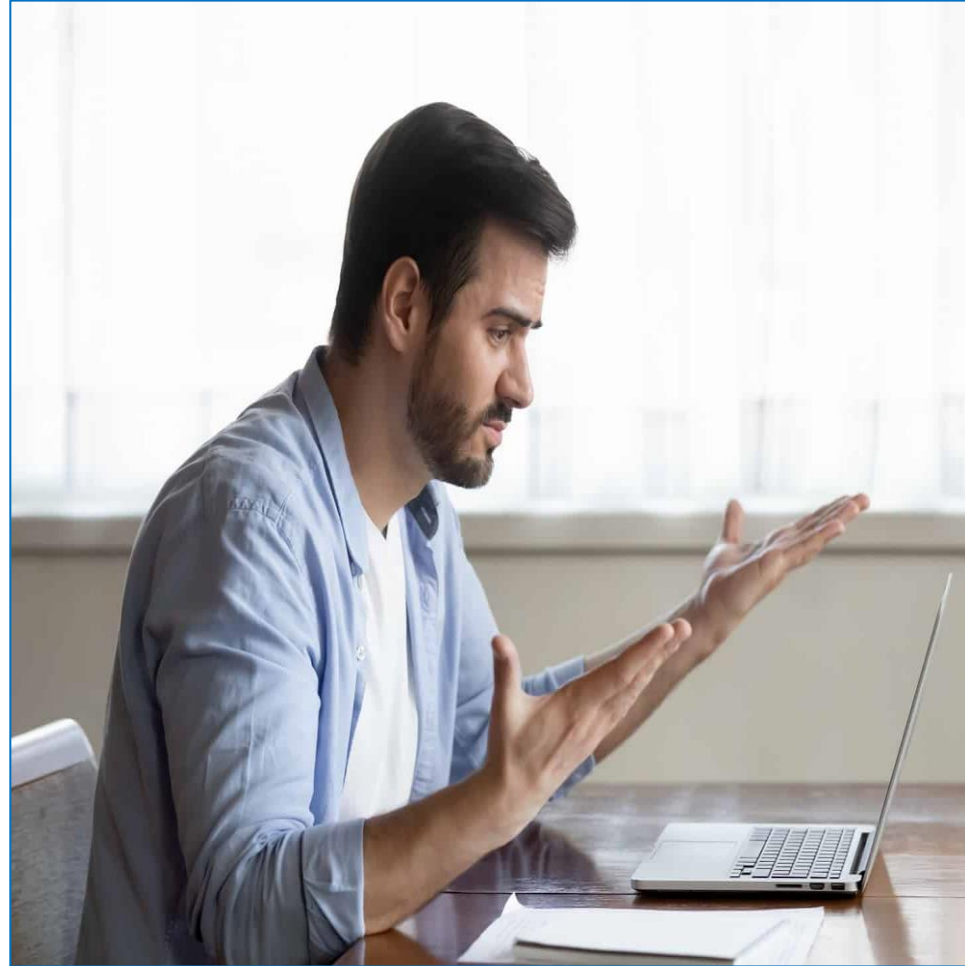
Types of Technological Barriers in Communication

Exercise

- Using clear examples, analyse communication at your former High School and identify barriers that could have contributed to ineffective communication in a given scenario.

- Advise the school management or any responsible personnel in the scenario above, what can be done to avoid ineffective communication from reoccurring.

References

- https://youtu.be/f5Tao6KHV5w?si=E0znFDMEdC0Dk764
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